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PROGRESS IN THE INCORPORATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE ACTIVITIES OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND MEASURES UNDERTAKEN BY THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON COORDINATION TO ENSURE THAT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES ARE INCORPORATED IN PROGRAMMES AND PROCESSES WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

Information provided by the United Nations Environment Programme on the implementation of Agenda 21

Note by the Secretary-General

1. In paragraph 25 of its resolution 47/191 of 22 December 1992, the General Assembly requested the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme and the Trade and Development Board to examine the relevant provisions of chapter 38 of Agenda 21 1/ at their next sessions and to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, through the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Economic and Social Council, reports on their specific plans to implement Agenda 21.

2. Annexed to the present note is a report of the Governing Council of UNEP on plans to implement Agenda 21, which was considered by the Governing Council at its seventeenth session, held at Nairobi from 10 to 21 May.

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* E/CN.17/1993/4.

1/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8), Resolutions adopted by the Conference, resolution 1, annex II.

Annex

REPORT OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME ON PLANS TO IMPLEMENT AGENDA 21*

Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in response to paragraph 25 of General Assembly resolution 47/191 of 22 December 1992, in which the General Assembly calls for the Governing Council to examine chapter 38 of Agenda 21 and report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, through the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Economic and Social Council, on the Governing Council's specific plans to implement Agenda 21.

2. Further, in paragraphs 21 and 22 of that same resolution, the General Assembly calls for reports to be made on the steps taken to implement Agenda 21. The present report is designed so as to reply to that request as well. It should be read in conjunction with the decisions adopted by the Governing Council at its seventeenth session. The principal decisions of the Council related to UNEP's UNCED implementation are outlined in the text and the full text of the decisions are annexed to the report of the Council on the work of its seventeenth session. The report presents a broad outline of UNEP's activities related to UNCED follow-up and has been considered by the Council in that light. It has not been submitted to detailed drafting by the Governing Council.

Agenda 21 and UNEP's responsibilities

3. After reviewing Agenda 21, the Governing Council believes that virtually all of UNEP's activities are addressed in Agenda 21, and that the general thrust of Agenda 21 does not change the mandate of the Council established in General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972. Rather, it reinforces UNEP's role and mandate and provides constructive changes in UNEP's programme emphasis in support of sustainable development.

4. Agenda 21 reinforces the basic catalytic and coordinating role of UNEP and the Governing Council's responsibilities for promoting international cooperation in the field of the environment, providing policy guidance for environmental programmes within the United Nations system, reporting on United Nations environmental programmes, reviewing the state of the world environment, promoting exchange of knowledge and reviewing the impacts of national and international policies and measures, especially on developing countries.

5. Agenda 21, in particular section II on conservation and management of resources for development, coincides with Governing Council decision 15/1 of 25 May 1989 concerning strengthening the role and effectiveness of UNEP. In that decision, the Council decided that UNEP should focus on eight areas of concentration: protection of the atmosphere, including climate change and global warming, the ozone layer and transboundary air pollution; protection of the quality of freshwater resources; protection of oceans and coastal areas; protection of land resources by combating deforestation and desertification; conservation of biological diversity; environmentally sound management of biotechnology; environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes and toxic chemicals; and the protection of human health and quality of life from degradation of the environment.

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6. Agenda 21 also incorporates many of the elements proposed by the Governing Council in the annex to its decision 15/3, also of 25 May 1989, elements that it proposed to the General Assembly for possible inclusion in a resolution concerning the convening of a United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The Agenda also contains many of the elements essential for sustainable development outlined in the Environmental Perspective to the Year 2000 and Beyond, formulated by the Governing Council and adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 42/186 of 11 December 1987. The companion resolution to 42/186 was resolution 42/187 of the same date in which the Assembly welcomed the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development. The decisions of the Council at its third special session (3-5 February 1992) are also reflected in Agenda 21.

UNEP's plans to implement Agenda 21

7. Agenda 21 provides a significant opportunity to integrate developmental and environmental considerations into a programme of specific achievable actions to support sustainable development and combat poverty. It reinforces UNEP's role and responsibilities in the field of the environment, and UNEP can make an important contribution to Agenda 21's implementation. The Governing Council pledges full support to the implementation of Agenda 21 and has called upon the Executive Director of UNEP to make every effort to strengthen, orient and adjust, as appropriate, UNEP's activities, programmes and medium-term plan and other activities, to help achieve the objectives of Agenda 21.

8. At its seventeenth session, the Council reviewed in detail UNEP's programme for the bienniums 1992-1993 and 1994-1995 to ensure that it provided maximum support to Agenda 21. In its decision 17/32 of 21 May 1993, it noted that the programme was in transition and would require further development to incorporate the changes required by UNCED. The Council reaffirmed that Agenda 21 must be developed in close cooperation with the Commission on Sustainable Development and requested UNEP's Executive Director to present to the Council at its next session her estimates of the costs for UNEP to implement fully those parts of Agenda 21 specifically recommended for the Programme's attention. The Council underlined that high priority should be given to activities which give direct or indirect substantial support to developing countries. The Council reviewed UNEP's programme priorities and decided to give greater emphasis to environmental management of freshwater resources, environmental management of terrestrial ecosystems and their resources, environmental management of oceans and all kinds of seas and coastal area management, environmental health, human settlements and human welfare, toxic chemicals and waste management, and capacity-building. It gave support as well to the Earthwatch programme of environmental sensing, international environmental law, environmental economics, industry, energy and the environment and cooperation in environmental action. It recognized the need to broaden the base of contributions to the UNEP Environment Fund and called upon all Governments in a position to do so to contribute to the Fund or, where they are already contributing, to increase their contributions on a voluntary basis.

9. The Governing Council at its seventeenth session noted with satisfaction that the Executive Director had restructured the UNEP proposed programme of fund activities, with 12 subprogrammes, four of them new, to facilitate cross-referencing with Agenda 21 and to give a clearer overview of UNEP's integrated work programme during formulation, development, implementation and reporting. The Council also noted that UNEP's restructured programme had been presented to the thirty-third session of the United Nations Committee on Programme and Coordination in 1992. The Committee incorporated UNEP's programme into the revised United Nations medium-term plan 1992-1997, giving high priority to nine of the environmental subprogrammes. The revised plan was approved by the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

10. The Council acknowledges that implementation of environmental assessment and management programmes is fundamentally the responsibility of Governments. The role of UNEP in particular is to provide encouragement, support and assistance in the development of the environmental components of Agenda 21 programmes, as well as to ensure the availability of information, assessments and, to the extent possible, technologies and resources to achieve sustainable development goals. Agenda 21 is to be carried out over a period of time with the involvement of many participants. UNEP, as a catalytic and coordinating organization for the environment, would encourage and stimulate a wide range of organizations, including Governments and United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and business, professional, scientific and community action groups, to take measures to achieve sustainable development goals.

Implementing chapter 38 of Agenda 21: International institutional arrangements

11. In implementing Agenda 21, the Governing Council attaches priority to chapter 38 on international institutional arrangements, in particular subsection H.1, paragraphs 38.21 to 38.23, which pertain to UNEP. In line with the priority areas on which UNEP is requested to concentrate in paragraph 38.22, the Council has approved the actions described in paragraphs 12 to 43 below, which correspond to those of chapter 38, paragraphs 38.21 to 38.23 concerning the United Nations Environment Programme. It also approved UNEP actions referred to in paragraphs 45-57 below, which relate to other chapters of Agenda 21.

Strengthening UNEP's catalytic role in stimulating and promoting environmental activities and considerations throughout the United Nations system

12. In promoting the integration of environment and development to achieve sustainable development, UNEP's traditional catalytic role will assume even greater importance and needs to be emphasized. UNEP's renewed actions to cooperate with other members of the United Nations system in advancing the agreed work in environmental sensing, for example, through the development of an early warning system under Earthwatch, and in providing assistance in cases of environmental emergencies as well as continuing to develop and implement international environmental law are all important examples of the catalytic work of UNEP. In addition, UNEP's new work in collaboration with other United Nations bodies on environmental economics and natural-resource accounting, on environmental indicators and in the development of a United Nations system approach to environmental impact assessment will encourage and support complementary action in the United Nations system. The Council will regularly review UNEP's existing catalytic efforts, such as the regional seas programme, the Earthwatch work of the Global Environment Monitoring System (GEMS), the Global Resource Information Database (GRID), INFOTERRA and the International Register of Potentially Toxic Chemicals (IRPTC), the education, training and capacity-building and information work, with a view to enhancing their contribution to the implementation of Agenda 21.

Promoting international cooperation in the field of environment and recommending appropriate policies to that end

13. The Council will continue to exercise its responsibilities in promoting international cooperation and recommending policies in the field of the environment and will give high priority to the additional priorities in chapter 38 of Agenda 21. The Council will also cooperate with the Commission on Sustainable Development in monitoring UNEP's work concerning the other chapters of Agenda 21 and ensuring that UNEP's cooperation with other participants and its policy responsibilities are exercised to the fullest. The Council believes that the strengthening and integration of environmental management programmes and of Earthwatch's environmental

sensing, early warning and emergency response activities and improving approaches to environmental capacity-building and environmental technology transfer are required in order to develop fully UNEP's cooperation and policy functions.

Developing and promoting the use of techniques such as natural-resource accounting and environmental economics

14. The Governing Council, in anticipating the need for greater work in the field of environment and economics, including social aspects, has at its seventeenth session approved the strengthening of UNEP's programme and work in this area, with particular emphasis on environmental economics, natural resource accounting, environmental impact assessment, including the social impacts, and the valuation of environmental and natural resources. The focus of this effort is on promoting the synthesis of social-economic analytical tools and instruments, testing and employing such tools, integrating environmental and natural resource accounting methodologies, developing policy instruments for environmental management and applying economic tools, especially for use in developing countries. This work will be conducted in close association with other United Nations organizations and development assistance institutions (e.g. World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations regional economic commissions, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Environmental sensing, both through improved participation by the United Nations system agencies in the Earthwatch programme and expanded relations with private scientific and non-governmental research institutes; strengthening and making operational its early-warning function

15. The Governing Council believes that Earthwatch will play a significant role in the implementation of Agenda 21. The global environmental assessments emanating from this United Nations system programme, coordinated by UNEP, should provide a basis for identifying existing knowledge and data and ascertaining where they can be found; pin-pointing gaps and generating new knowledge needed to guide decision-making; gathering and evaluating specific data to discern and predict important environmental conditions and trends; disseminating knowledge and data to scientists and technologists; and providing decision-makers at all levels with the best and timely information in useful forms. The programme needs to draw upon the best scientific research, technologies and information available, and to this end its cooperation with private and non-governmental research institutes will be expanded. Earthwatch will help to identify emerging problems, assess risks and issue early warnings where required. On the basis of its assessments, and in association with management, Earthwatch will contribute to proposing policies to reduce risks, combat environmental degradation and manage resources. Agenda 21 regards environmental sensing as a priority area for UNEP. In this context it calls *inter alia* for improved participation by the United Nations system agencies in the Earthwatch programme. Within the framework of the review of Earthwatch which has to be undertaken as a result of the decisions taken by the Council at its seventeenth session, special attention will be given to these system-wide aspects. The purpose should be to make Earthwatch a still more efficient instrument for environmental sensing of all elements influencing the global environment, thereby ensuring a balanced approach serving, in particular, the needs of developing countries.

16. In response to General Assembly resolution 44/224 of 22 December 1989, UNEP has already begun to introduce early-warning elements into Earthwatch's monitoring programmes. In cooperation with the United Nations Advisory Committee for the Coordination of Information Systems (ACCIS), UNEP is preparing a register of assessment-related environmental activities in the United Nations system as a first step towards establishing a continuing database or compendium. It is developing a computerized catalogue of geographic-based environmental data sets which will facilitate user access to such data through its Global Resource Information Database (GRID) network of cooperating centres. UNEP has published a guidebook for developing countries on preparing for drought and is developing guidelines for early warning of pollution of freshwater resources. UNEP is establishing additional relationships with government agencies, organizations and research institutes with a view to strengthening Earthwatch and its early-warning capability. The Governing Council considers this as an important programme, considering that it is a support to other programmes.

Coordination and promotion of relevant scientific research with a view to providing a consolidated basis for decision-making

17. The Governing Council is of the view that sound science and research, upon which UNEP's main achievements have been firmly based, must be at the heart of UNEP's work. UNEP's environmental assessment programme in support of Earthwatch, which encompasses GEMS, GRID, IRPTC and INFOTERRA, was founded to coordinate and provide information from the world's best science and research on all aspects of the environment - terrestrial, oceanic, atmospheric and renewable resources. This information led to the agreement on environmental management programmes in chemicals, the oceans and regional seas and human health. The results of UNEP coordinated science and research assisted Governments to reach environmental protection agreements on ozone depletion, hazardous wastes, climate change and biological diversity.

18. The Governing Council will ensure that UNEP's emphasis on sound research and scientific information continues and is directed increasingly to the needs of sustainable development and implementing Agenda 21. For example, in the light of UNCED, UNEP's desertification programme has redirected its research toward the social impacts of desertification, the economic costs and linkages, and success stories of dryland protection. The terrestrial ecosystem programme is reorienting its efforts towards the application of economic tools in national policies for ecosystems management, for example, concerning forests, water, fisheries and agriculture. For the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), UNEP's climate programme is coordinating climate-related country studies. Within the World Meteorological Organization's World Climate Programme, the World Climate Impact Assessment and Response Strategies Programme (WCIRP), coordinated by UNEP and with the IPCC and OECD, will provide national inventories of greenhouse gas sources and sinks that will contribute substantially to the objectives of Agenda 21. UNEP is cooperating with WMO, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (IOC/UNESCO) and the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) in the development of the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) and, additionally, UNEP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), WMO, UNESCO and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) are exploring the development of a Global Terrestrial Observing System (GTOS) to help determine the effects of climate change on terrestrial ecosystems. Many other components of UNEP's scientific and research activities will be directed to sustainable development issues.

Dissemination of environmental information and data to Governments and to organs, programmes and organizations of the United Nations system

19. UNEP's information dissemination activities for Governments and the United Nations system will increasingly focus on the needs of sustainable development and the objectives set out in Agenda 21. Such activities include the scientific information services of the environmental components of Earthwatch, GEMS, INFOTERRA, IRPTC and GRID; the provision of environmental data in usable forms; the preparation of publications on climate, fresh water, oceans, desertification, biological diversity, hazardous wastes and toxic chemicals, health, law and education; and regular news releases, special information packages, features, films, television, exhibits and maintenance of regular contact with Governments and other United Nations organizations.

20. The publication of the report *The World Environment 1972-1992* in December 1992 was an important UNEP contribution to understanding the state of the world environment. Commissioned by the Governing Council, the 884-page report outlines the major environmental issues and trends over the past 20 years, from the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm in 1972, to UNCED in 1992. It defines the causes and consequences of the decline of much of the world's environment during that period by linking the environmental conditions to human economic activity. It details the national and international responses to environmental conditions and sets forth an agenda of corrective actions, consistent with Agenda 21, for the community of nations. The Council believes the publication is an important benchmark for action on sustainable development and, at its seventeenth session, agreed to provide another world environment report 10 years hence.

21. At its seventeenth session, the Governing Council also noted that steps would be taken to enhance further UNEP's information dissemination activities by approving a new approach to reporting on the state of the environment. The Council's action entails the regular preparation and dissemination of sectoral/topic-specific scientific reports, assessments and environmental data compilations on topics such as biodiversity, non-renewable resources, pollution and socio-economic aspects of environment and development. As stated in paragraph 20 above, it has requested a comprehensive state-of-the-environment report every 10 years. To assist the Governing Council to keep the world situation under review, it has requested the Executive Director to continue to make a statement at each Council session on key environmental policy issues, new environmental concerns, early warning, environmental events of global significance and actions that should be taken. These reports will be made available to Governments, the United Nations system and the public at large.

Raising general awareness and action in the area of environmental protection through collaboration with the general public, non-governmental entities and intergovernmental institutions

22. The Council believes that much of the information provided by UNEP mentioned in the foregoing paragraphs will raise the environmental awareness of the general public, the media, non-governmental entities and intergovernmental institutions. A principal vehicle for stimulating worldwide awareness of environmental concern will continue to be UNEP initiative to celebrate World Environment Day in various regions of the world. In addition, the Council has called upon the Executive Director to enhance cooperation with non-governmental organizations. As a consequence, UNEP will broaden its programme to reach out to a wider constituency of the non-governmental community action organizations, including those of women and youth, to encourage them to incorporate environmental protection and sustainable development activities into their current and future programmes

of work. At the seventeenth session, the Governing Council adopted a special decision on women in the environment and development requesting the Executive Director to ensure that gender considerations were well integrated into all policies, programmes and activities of UNEP (decision 17/4 of 21 May 1993). Additionally, UNEP, in cooperation with UNICEF, published a state-of-the-environment report on children and the environment in 1990. The format of UNEP's collaboration with community action organizations such as the World Organization of the Scout Movement, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts and the Red Cross, will be applied in designing community-level programmes with Rotary International, the International Lions Club, the Young Womens' Christian Association and Young Mens' Christian Association, and used as a model for cooperation with other non-environmental NGOs, including those specializing in rural development.

Further development of international environmental law, in particular conventions and guidelines, promotion of its implementation, and coordinating functions arising from an increasing number of international legal agreements, inter alia, the functioning of the secretariats of the conventions, taking into account the need for the most efficient use of resources, including possible co-location of secretariats established in the future

23. UNEP will continue to work closely, as requested, with Governments and members of the United Nations system to develop international legal instruments, in particular guidelines and conventions, to help meet the information requirements of such instruments, to promote their implementation and contribute to the process of monitoring compliance. New areas of attention will be of assistance to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the elaboration of a convention on desertification. In line with chapter 39 of Agenda 21, UNEP will also have to ascertain its role, as well, in the new field of international law for sustainable development. UNEP will also consider measures for formulating a possible international legal instrument on the prior informed consent (PIC) procedure, contained in the amended London Guidelines for the Exchange of Information on Chemicals in International Trade and the FAO International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides. There will also be consideration of possible steps toward a programme of action for protecting the marine environment from land-based activities.

24. Importance will also be placed on implementing recently achieved environmental agreements. High priority will be given to assisting Governments in achieving the early entry into force and effective implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and to establishing the interim Secretariat and furthering its work programme.

25. To promote further sustainable development through international environmental law, the Governing Council is also collaborating with Governments to encourage more active implementation of other international environmental agreements for which UNEP bears responsibility - the eight regional seas conventions, the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and its amendment, the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS). The Council will also ensure that the UNEP secretariat continues to contribute to the work on other legal instruments, as requested, among them the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Further, the Council will review the needs for additional measures to strengthen international environmental law within the framework of UNEP's Programme

for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law for the present decade, adopted by the Council in its decision 17/25 of 21 May 1993, as a broad strategy for UNEP's activities in the field of environmental law for the 1990s.

26. Aware of the continuing need to assist Governments, especially in developing countries, to develop national environmental legislation, the Council has requested the Executive Director to provide increased assistance to Governments for this purpose and, to this end, to seek to work closely with UNDP in its Capacity 21 programme, as well as with other United Nations agencies and relevant international organizations.

27. Additionally, the Council is acutely aware of the importance of providing coherent coordination, cooperation and consultation among the environmental conventions and interim secretariats administered by UNEP, in order to improve the effectiveness of convention implementation, and has requested the Executive Director to promote further measures to that end (decision 17/25 of 21 May 1993, paragraph 7).

Further development and promotion of the widest possible use of environmental impact assessments, including activities carried out under the auspices of United Nations specialized agencies, and in connection with every significant economic development project or activity

28. Drawing upon its experience in developing methodologies, guidelines and principles and in training in environmental impact assessment, and drawing upon the recent advances in methodologies and techniques in the field of environmental impact assessment, UNEP will seek to work within the Inter-agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD), the new coordinating machinery under the Secretary-General's Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), to introduce additional and appropriate environmental impact assessment procedures into the developmental projects and activities of the United Nations system.

Facilitation of information exchange on environmentally sound technologies, including legal aspects, and provision of training

29. At its seventeenth session, the Governing Council, reinforced its earlier decision 16/33 to promote the transfer of environmentally sound technology through UNEP's cleaner production programme, which facilitates the transfer of technologies and management tools that reduce emissions at the source and conserves raw materials and energy. By paragraph 4 of its decision 17/7 of 21 May 1993, it requested the Executive Director to examine the feasibility of developing international guidelines on what information on potential environmental impacts the exporters of technology should provide to importers.

30. UNEP's Industry and Environment Programme Activity Centre will continue to promote the exchange of information on cleaner production technologies, develop its Ozone Action information clearing-house to provide information on CFC substitute technologies for protecting the ozone layer, and carry out technology assessment work. The newly established UNEP International Environmental Technology Centre in Japan will provide information, training and consulting services on technologies used in environmental protection and enhancement of urban areas and freshwater lakes, and it is hoped that additional centres will be established in other parts of the world. The World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), a collaborative organization among UNEP, World Wide Fund for Nature, IUCN, and the World Resources Institute (WRI), will continue to provide assessments of the distribution and abundance of the world's species. UNEP's Collaborating Centre on Energy and the Environment in Denmark will

continue to promote information exchange on energy technologies in the development of environmentally sound national energy plans. The Earthwatch programmes are encouraging the exchange of information and provision of training in information handling technologies as part of their work and the UNEP-led secretariats for the conventions on ozone, hazardous wastes and biological diversity are promoting the identification of valuable new technologies in their respective fields.

31. Convinced that the transfer of technology is central to protection of the environment and the needs of developing countries, the Governing Council will continue to promote, where possible, the flow of information and training for new environmentally sound technologies in each of UNEP's programmes.

Promotion of subregional and regional cooperation and support to relevant initiatives and programmes for environmental protection, including playing a major contributing and coordinating role in the regional mechanisms in the field of environment identified for the follow-up to UNCED

32. Recognizing that many environmental problems can be solved only through regional collaboration, the Governing Council notes with satisfaction that UNEP's existing programmes devote substantial emphasis to regional cooperation. The regional seas programme and its subregional programmes represent a world wide regional approach to protecting oceans and coastal areas. The programme for the environmentally sound management of inland waters (EMINWA) represents another example of a regional approach, as do the Cairo Programme for African Cooperation of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), the Action Plan for the Environment in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Plan of Action of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environment (CAMRE), and the support to environmental programmes in Europe and to subregional programmes in Asia and the Pacific. At the seventeenth session, the Governing Council decided to request the Executive Director to consider how UNEP can best assist the countries with economies in transition (decision 17/27 of 21 May 1993).

33. UNEP recently developed new, bilateral cooperative environmental programmes with the United Nations regional economic commissions. Through the Committee of International Development Institutions on the Environment (CIDIE), it cooperates with the regional development banks and with UNDP/United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office in implementing the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification in the Sudano-Sahelian region.

34. At its seventeenth session, the Council has encouraged the Executive Director to enhance those and other regional cooperative activities whenever possible and to explore constructive new regional cooperative work in support of Agenda 21 (see decision 17/28 of 21 May 1993).

Provision of technical, legal and institutional advice to Governments, upon request, in establishing and enhancing their national legal and institutional frameworks, in particular, in cooperation with UNDP capacity-building efforts

35. The Governing Council at its seventeenth session approved a proposed programme of fund activities for UNEP, which includes an expanded programme of capacity-building in virtually every area of UNEP's work. The Governing Council is determined that capacity-building will become an even greater field of UNEP's priority attention. To highlight the priority placed on capacity-building and to focus this work more clearly, a separate subprogramme section has been introduced for "Capacity-building for environmentally sound and sustainable development including the establishment of international environmentally sound technology centres",

which seeks to enhance UNEP's existing capacity-building and training activities. All other UNEP subprogrammes contribute to the realization of capacity-building designed to coordinate and strengthen the analytical, policy, institutional and practical capabilities of countries to pursue sustainable development.

36. Meanwhile, UNEP has joined other United Nations organizations and agencies to contribute to UNDP's Capacity 21 programme. The UNEP secretariat has developed a proposal for enhancing UNEP's capability to provide capacity-building services to developing countries and is exploring the possibility of its broad cooperative use with UNDP in meetings of the secretariats just before the Governing Council's seventeenth session and with bilateral assistance agencies and with international lending institutions through the CIDIE. Additionally, in collaboration with UNESCO, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), UNDP, Governments and universities, UNEP recently established an additional course for environmental managers from developing countries at Adelaide University, Australia, which supplements similar training programmes at universities in Finland, Germany, Switzerland and the United States. UNEP is continuing its cooperation with UNESCO in the International Environmental Education Programme to give an environmental dimension to national educational systems.

Supporting Governments, upon request, and development agencies and organs in the integration of environmental aspects into their development policies and programmes, in particular through provision of environmental technical and policy advice during programme formulation and implementation

37. Through UNEP's current technical assistance activities in each programme area, the growing International Environmental Education Programme, the enhanced capacity-building efforts throughout the United Nations system, the contribution of a restructured Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other measures taken to carry out Agenda 21, the Governing Council believes that UNEP and the other members of the United Nations system will increasingly provide assistance to Governments in integrating environmental concerns into development policies and programmes. In reviewing the proposed programme of Fund activities at its seventeenth session, the Governing Council ensured that activities to assist developing countries to assess, monitor and manage environmental problems in accordance with national objectives and priorities were reflected in major programme areas, particularly in the work of the regional environmental programmes, and in Earthwatch programmes. UNEP has also given prominence to strengthening the organizational, administrative, legislative and planning infrastructure in its clearing-house, international law and capacity-building programmes. Each of UNEP's environmental management sectors has incorporated means for assistance in formulating policy and provision of technical advice and training. The Council will keep this mandate and UNEP's programmes under continuing review and report on them accordingly.

Further developing assessment and assistance in cases of environmental emergencies

38. The Governing Council believes there is a need to develop further assessment and assistance to countries in cases of environmental emergencies. The Council also believes that the United Nations can assist in meeting this need. At its sixteenth session in 1991, the Council, in its decision 16/9, endorsed the Executive Director's proposal to develop on an experimental basis a "United Nations centre for urgent environmental assistance acting in cooperation and in coordination with other United Nations agencies, focusing on assessment of and responses to man-made environmental emergencies". The Council noted at that time that a

number of Governments and United Nations agencies had emergency capabilities and centres which, it hoped, a United Nations emergency centre might complement and reinforce. At its seventeenth session, the Council reviewed the work of the Centre and decided to continue the Centre's experimental phase for a further 12 months (see decision 17/26 of 21 May 1993. It recommended that in that time a number of changes should be made in the Centre's terms of reference to focus its capacities to identify needs for emergency assistance, to analyze international response systems and capacities and to develop concrete proposals for enhancing the international response capacity with a special focus on the improvement of the United Nations system in that regard.

39. With regard to emergency preparedness, the Council calls attention to UNEP's Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at the Local Level (APELL) programme, which is carried out in cooperation with private industry. The programme helps local communities to be alert to and develop their own emergency response plans for industrial hazards. With a network of 69 national focal points, the APELL programme disseminates and exchanges information and offers training and assistance in the case of emergencies. It provides an excellent example of capacity-building and of implementing the emergency response called for in Agenda 21.

Implementing chapter 38, paragraph 38.23 of Agenda 21

40. Agenda 21, paragraph 38.23, calls for greater expertise and financial resources for UNEP to perform its Agenda 21 functions. It also calls for closer cooperation and collaboration with other organizations, the strengthening of UNEP's regional offices without weakening its Nairobi headquarters, and the intensifying of cooperation with UNDP and the World Bank. At its seventeenth session, the Governing Council, in its decision 17/32 of 21 May 1993, approved an appropriation of $120/130 million for a core programme for the biennium 1994-1995 from the Environment Fund of UNEP. It also approved an additional appropriation of $10 million for use as and when additional resources became available.

41. In the same decision, the Council noted with concern that the 1992 target of $100 million for contributions to the Environment Fund, which it had agreed upon at its fifteenth session in 1989, had not been achieved. Rather, 1992 contributions were estimated at $63.95 million, well short of the target. Consequently, the Council called upon all Governments to contribute to or increase their contributions to the Environment Fund.

42. Since the Conference at Rio, the UNEP secretariat has held numerous discussions related to UNCED with development organizations within and outside the United Nations system, most notably the regional development banks, both bilaterally and within the framework of CIDIE and GEF. United Nations agencies and programmes have held detailed discussions on the implementation of Agenda 21 within the framework of the United Nations Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) and its Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development.

43. As to strengthening UNEP's regional offices, at its fifteenth session in 1989, the Governing Council endorsed the strengthening of UNEP's regional office system when resources became available. The Council regrets that there have not been sufficient resources to achieve this, and it has called upon member Governments to seek to increase their contributions in the years ahead. The Council welcomes the Executive Director's expression of intention to strengthen UNEP's regional offices to enable them, along with other duties, to contribute to the implementation of UNCED at the regional level.

Highlights of the implementation of other aspects of Agenda 21

44. The Governing Council notes that UNEP's responsibilities for implementing Agenda 21 go well beyond the specific actions called for in chapter 38 of Agenda 21. In addition to those actions, major UNEP contributions to UNCED and Agenda 21 are highlighted in paragraphs 45 to 57 below.

Protection of the atmosphere (Agenda 21)

45. UNEP will work closely with Governments and United Nations agencies in supporting the implementation of the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and its Montreal Protocol and of the Framework Convention on Climate Change, in particular through the coordination of climate-related country studies and through encouraging education and awareness-raising programmes. UNEP will also support and participate in research, monitoring, observing and assessment programmes, specifically the World Climate Programme, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the Global Climate Observing System.

Combating deforestation (Agenda 21)

46. When requested, UNEP will assist in the efforts of Governments, United Nations agencies and the Commission on Sustainable Development on the Non-Legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests. It will, when requested, also take part in the coordination of global and regional forest assessments and in the development and dissemination of forest data.

Managing fragile ecosystems: combating desertification and drought (Agenda 21, chapter 12)

47. UNEP will work closely with the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the elaboration of a convention on desertification and its secretariat in developing the convention. UNEP databases, assessments and information on a national desertification strategy, as well as the advisory service in international law, will be made available for the negotiators' use. It is expected that UNEP's considerable experience on these issues, related to the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification, will enable UNEP to play an important role in supporting the negotiations and in the structures to be established by the convention. The convention is of particular interest in the follow-up to UNCED, since it will address a large number of issues related to environment and development against the background of socio-economic factors and problems of poverty.

Protection of the oceans and all kinds of seas (Agenda 21, chapter 17)

48. The Governing Council at its seventeenth session decided to convene in late 1995 an intergovernmental meeting on the protection of the marine environment from land-based activities (see decision 17/20 of 21 May 1993).

49. For the organizers of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, UNEP will cooperate fully in holding regional technical preparatory meetings and in working out the preparations for the Conference, making available support from its regional seas programme and funding for participating experts.

Protecting freshwater resources (Agenda 21, chapter 18)

50. UNEP's approach to managing water resources, including integrated water basin management activities, will be strengthened by the recent decision to combine all the United Nations Secretariat's freshwater activities under UNEP direction. The United Nations Water Resources Branch

will move to UNEP, thus enabling UNEP to address a wider range of freshwater resources related issues, including the relationships to socio-economic aspects and questions related to poverty, especially the availability and protection of drinking water and adequate sanitation.

Environmentally sound management of toxic chemicals (Agenda 21)

51. At its sixteenth session, in 1991, the Governing Council requested UNEP's Executive Director to consult with International Labour Organisation (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and others to develop proposals for an intergovernmental mechanism for risk assessment and management of chemicals. Paragraph 19.76 of Agenda 21 invites the executive heads of UNEP, ILO and WHO to organize an intergovernmental meeting within one year to consider the establishment of an intergovernmental forum on chemical risk assessment and management, which the UNEP secretariat is now preparing to organize with its partner agencies in the United Nations (see Council decision 17/28 of 21 May 1993).

Transfer of environmentally sound technology (Agenda 21, chapter 34)

52. The Governing Council recognizes the essentiality of expediting the transfer of environmentally sound technology to foster environmentally sound development. At its seventeenth session, it called for stronger measures to encourage technology transfer through UNEP's Industry and Environment Programme Activity Centre in France and the recently established Environmental Technology Centre in Japan, as well as through such centres in developing countries in the future, in conformity with Council decisions 16/33 and 16/34 and Agenda 21, chapter 34. The Council called for strengthened work in the technology areas UNEP is currently involved in, as set out in paragraphs 16 and 29 above.

Science for sustainable development (Agenda 21, chapter 35)

53. The Governing Council places high priority on strengthening UNEP's contribution to science for managing sustainable development and believes UNEP should make major contributions in strengthening the specific foundations for sustainable development, enhancing scientific understanding of the environmental aspects of sustainable development, improving long-term scientific assessments and helping provide capacity-building in environmental science, as outlined especially in paragraphs 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19 of this report.

Strengthening the role of major groups (Agenda 21, section III)

54. For years, through its outreach programme, UNEP has carried out active programmes of environmental cooperation with groups of women, children and youth, non-governmental organizations, local authorities, business and industry, scientific and technological communities and others. In the months ahead, these efforts will be enhanced and activities with new groups will be considered, with a view to promoting cooperation on sustainable development. Issues of women in environment and sustainable development will be given due consideration (see decision 17/4 of 21 May 1993).

Global Environment Facility (GEF)

55. The Governing Council recognizes that the GEF can serve as an important source of funding for the implementation of Agenda 21, and the Council places high priority on UNEP's being a full partner with the World Bank and UNDP in guiding the work of GEF. At its seventeenth session, the Council, in its decision 17/40 of 21 May 1993, endorsed UNEP's participation in GEF's pilot phase, noting UNEP's special mandate as the principal United Nations environmental body and bearing in mind the recommendations concerning GEF in Agenda 21. The Council noted the

progress achieved by the Participants in the Global Environment Facility and the implementing agencies in outlining the restructuring of the Facility. It noted also the invitations for GEF, on the condition that it is appropriately restructured, to serve as a funding arrangement for the Convention on Biological Diversity, in accordance with Article 21 of the Convention, on an interim basis until the first Conference of the parties and to be the international entity entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism, on an interim basis, for the United Nations Convention on Climate Change.

Additional Governing Council actions to enhance implementation of Agenda 21

56. In addition to the numerous actions outlined above, the Governing Council has initiated or reviewed a number of other actions to implement Agenda 21.

Cooperation between UNEP and the Commission on Sustainable Development

57. The Governing Council looks forward to cooperating fully with the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) as the Commission carries out its function of monitoring progress and providing appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly in the implementation of Agenda 21 (paragraph 38.13). UNEP will publish reports on its activities concerning implementation (paragraph 38.4) and will participate, as appropriate, in the review of the Commission's work (paragraph 38.11) to be carried out by the Economic and Social Council.

Governing Council decisions on the strengthening of UNEP

58. The Governing Council intends that UNEP will play a vital role in the implementation of Agenda 21. At its fifteenth session, the Council proposed a number of measures to improve UNEP's effectiveness and, at the seventeenth session, it took steps to strengthen UNEP's ability to implement Agenda 21. The Council will continue to review UNEP's activities periodically to see what additional measures may be required to strengthen UNEP and its capacity to implement Agenda 21.